

2013

Wineskin, 2013

Leah Abraham ed.

the
Wineskin

2013-14



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GEORGE FOX
UNIVERSITY

~ TABLE OF CONTENTS ~

2	Letter From the Editor
3	Staff
4	Poetry Divider
12	Brooklynesque: <i>Brice Ezell</i>
15	Raindrop: <i>Kelsey Vaughn</i>
16	Glued Together and Framed: <i>Anastasia</i>
18	Am I Being Held?: <i>Joanna Rocha</i>
22	Just a Little Bit Desperate: <i>Allison Meade</i>
23	Suspension of Time: <i>Andrei Miclea</i>
25	The Catch: <i>Daniel Kassahn</i>
26	All the World's: <i>Ryan Lackey</i>
28	Prose Divider
30	Bitter Pearl: <i>Annie Puntenney</i>
34	Measuring Up: <i>Tori Nunnenkamp</i>
39	Pictures: <i>Shaundrea Hirengen</i>
40	Tattered: <i>Heather Harney</i>
42	Erilyn: <i>Cheyenne Buck</i>
46	A Tail of Two Strays: <i>Denny Muia</i>
50	If Only for a Moment: <i>Jordan Nelson</i>
52	Postcards from a Rainy Day: <i>Emily Lund</i>
54	The Monsters in My Life: <i>Samantha Maise</i>
58	A Spy Within A Spy: <i>Allison Kitz</i>
62	Glamour: <i>Mikaela Bray</i>
72	Interview Divider
74	Artist Interview: <i>Cambria Hererra</i>

~ LETTER FROM THE EDITOR ~



I found an old leather-bound copy of the Wineskin hiding in the Quaker room of the library. This issue, dated 1984, is presumably the first issue ever published. I sat on the dusty library carpet and soaked in the nostalgic moment as I read the stories that were upon those yellowing pages.

On the first page, scripture from the Gospel of Matthew is quoted: “Neither do men pour new wine into old wineskins. If they do, the skins will burst, and the wine will run out and the wineskins will be ruined. *No, they poured new wine into the new wineskins, and both are persevered.*”

Call me a romantic, but I felt the blessing ascend from the ages past (well, at least from 30 years ago).

“It is my hope that the sculpted abstracts found in Wineskin will direct toward truth. It is also my hope that new wine will

continue to be poured into Wineskin in the future,” writes Mark Conterill, the editor of that issue.

Thirty years later, I am apprehensive, just as Conterill was (“...I had ‘fears’ about receiving enough material to print.” So did I, Conterill). We are rebranding, reformatting, and redesigning. It’s a scary and exhilarating process. But I believe in the art of storytelling.

I am thankful for all the writers and artists who submitted; your stories matter. I am thankful for my staff; you have poured in a lot of hard work into this baby. And also, I am thankful for you, our reader; this is meant for you.

Here is new wine being poured into a new wineskin. May you get drunk on the poetry spilled onto these pages. May you sip and delight in the stories in prose. May you feast on the art that is scattered through this magazine. And may we all celebrate new wine, which essentially, is the stories that make us whole.

Cheers,
Leah Abraham
Editor-in-Chief

~ STAFF ~



LEHMAN PEKKOLA | *Design Editor*

Lehman Pekkola is a freshman graphic design major. Since as long as he can remember, he has always been fascinated by creativity and finds great joy in making something that is visually and aesthetically pleasing to people. He also enjoys going on spontaneous adventures with friends, discovering new eateries around Portland, and enjoying God's beautiful creation.



KELLY TOMS | *Art Editor*

Kelly Toms is a junior graphic design major, also with an emphasis in photography. All around she loves art and being able to be in a creative mindset in all of her work. She comes from the land of sun, California, and enjoys going on long adventure runs out in nature.



JULIA HOWELL | *Poetry Editor*

Julia Howell is a sophomore english major. She started writing this year for the Crescent student newspaper and loves getting the inside scoop on general campus scuttlebutt. She also enjoys reading poetry and buying everything covered in polka-dots.



SARAH BRASE | *Prose Editor*

Sarah Brase is a senior journalism major. She finds joy in sunshine, rainy days, candid photos, storytelling, traveling, and old fashioned letters. Sarah calls Fort Collins, CO home, and Oregon a close second. She spent a semester in Rwanda and desires to continue discovering the endless stories left to be told.

poetry

Poetry is truth in its Sunday clothes.

~ Joseph Roux





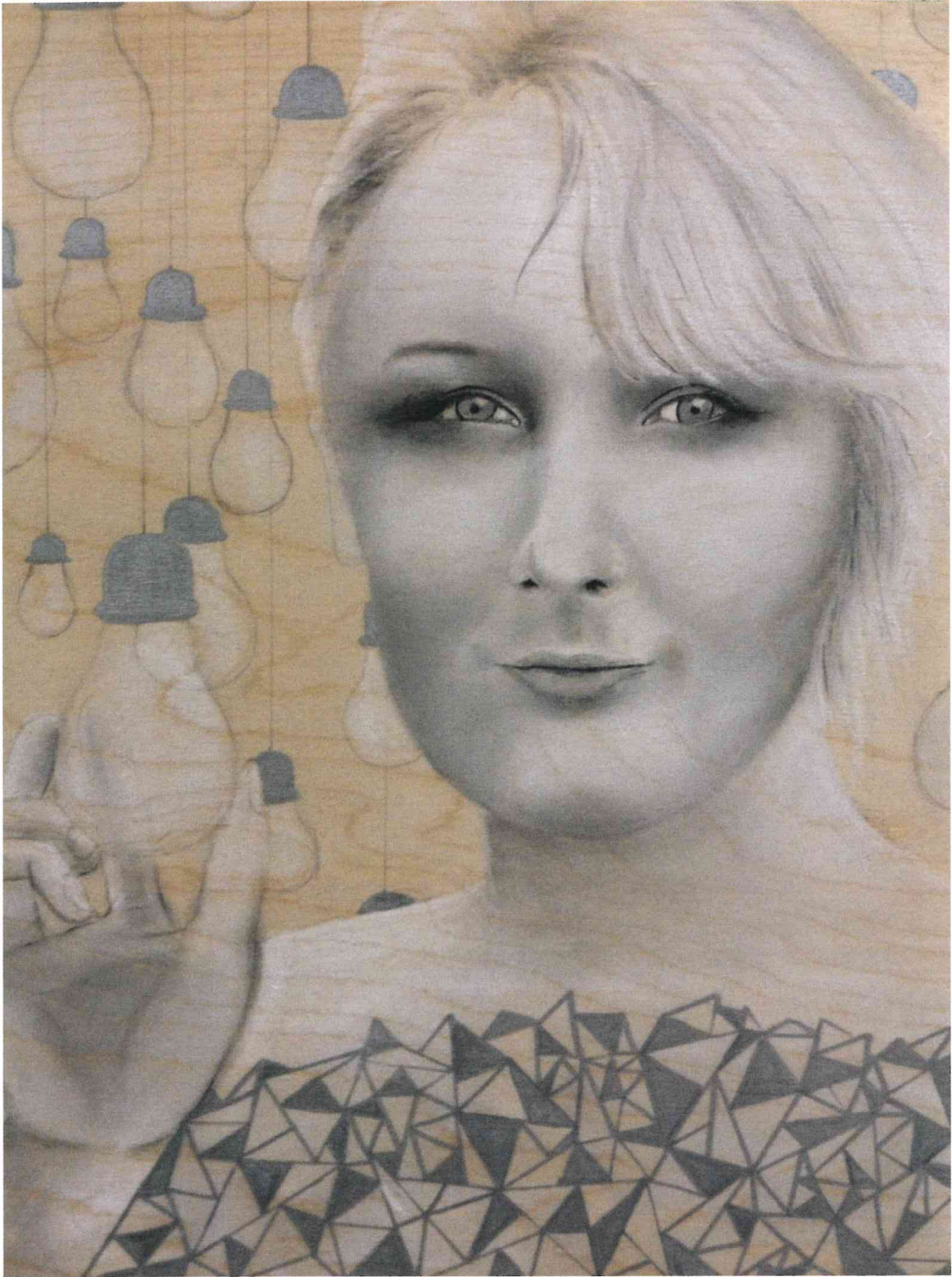
REFLECTION



Michaela Hiltz



REGALIS
Erin Rice



VICTORIA
Catherine Ng



SONG OF SUNS
Lauren Parker



SUNSET ACROSS MADISON RIVER
Grady Hallenbeck



STAR TRAILS
Colin Daniel

BROOKLYNESQUE

Brice Ezell

For Billy Joel

I'm waiting for someone
to reinvent the piano man's
New York State of Mind
such that the critics affix
to it the label "Brooklynesque."

'Round Central park the taxis
still honk their symphonies
of impatience. Broadway manages
to fill its seats, cheap as they
aren't. But now the axis of this city
is turning. Maybe many a Manhattanite
is finally taking to Miami,
planning for the inevitable 2017.

The lights of Times Square are starting
to fade, overtaken by the youthful pulse
starting to enliven Brooklyn. Not so long
ago, walking through the gridlock streets
of Manhattan, you couldn't think you could
want any more than that out of life.

Metropolises aren't rising and falling
in America; they're dividing and conquering.
But while the angels in the west expand
and swallow their neighbors every which way,
the Big Apple is starting to grow cold
in the shade of the tree growing next door.

So I raise a toast to the song
spinning in the mind of an insightful
twentysomething. For now, I can still
revel in the perfect crescendo of the
classic New York State of Mind,

even as the beaten leather and cigarette
plumed environs of the Fifth Avenue
jazz clubs fades from memory like the
grooves of an aging vinyl record, notes ringing
for however long they can in the changing times.

As one song fades from the frets and ivories,
another will come to carry its spirit. Even the
Piano Man knows that music will
always find a way to get by.





HAZE
Hayley Delle

RAINDROP

Kelsey Vaughn

Please, rain, proceed;
continue tapping Morse code on my roof,
spelling out the similes and metaphors of the sky.

Continue to soften the edges of the night
so I can continue to sit at my window,
lost in thin textbook pages,
skipping the grammar lessons
and lingering over endless lines of poetry.

Keep falling, rain,
and I'll count a blessing with each raindrop.

For you always nourish me
but never quench me;
my lamp will burn through the night and the window,
now a flame, now a lighthouse, now a mirror held up to the sun—

Now just my lamp to read by,
with each tap on the roof a piece of punctuation,
until I can dream of the poetry of raindrops
and speak the language of the clouds.



GLUED TOGETHER AND FRAMED

Anastasia

I feel that lately
You and I communicate mostly in silence
Laughing in glances, fighting in glares
Crying in smiles, longing in stares

In one look, telling the other:
I know what makes you giggle
I know what makes you tick
I know what makes you sad

But I miss our witty exchanges
Because more than your faces, I love your words
Words exquisite, deliciously complex
Ones I can ruminate over for hours
Words in which I can search for you

What upsets me the most isn't that we aren't talking
But that you already know exactly what I would say
You don't want my predictable words anymore
I'm a puzzle you've solved long ago,
Glued together and framed





SHOCK
Katie Culbertson

AM I BEING HELD?

Joanna Rocha

I need someone to hold me.
Don't let go.
Please don't.

I am standing or so I thought until I felt a pang in my chest.
Ache in my mind and tears falling down.
God, are you carrying me right now?
Am I too weak? Am I not determined enough?
"You're stupid, you are not going to graduate. So why do you
keep trying?"
"They don't believe in me, but I'm trying. I want to make my
mom proud."
"What's wrong with me?"
"Why don't I care?!" I heard her say.
Stay strong.
Then I took it upon myself.
I care.
I'll carry you if necessary.
"Have you ever fallen in love?"
"No"
I see...

I wonder why...in a world with so many beings. Is it possible to
live and not feel lo-
"I'm sorry."
"I'm sorry you had to go through that."
I look within those statements.
The conversations I had with loved ones.
Why did I take them at heart?
Why am I looking over it?
Even though I'm far away right now, I feel like I'm finally getting
the big picture.
But right now... I feel lost myself.
Like if I'm floating each day with thoughts of how to make things
better.
Thoughts of home, of conversations like these.
I feel troubled but yet as if I had found something I previously
lost.

Falling...
Perhaps I am already in the ground back to reality.
God are you carrying me? Did I fall hard?
Did I fall smoothly in step?
It's okay, I forgave you a long time ago.
Did I fall at all?
What are you trying to tell me?
I feel and see your work in wondrous ways.
Creating the people in which are made in your image right>
Am I part of you to these people?
Helping them out and encouraging life;
Just as much as I see You in the words and actions of those who
have touched my life?
Somehow I felt lonely today...
Though there is no physical being holding me, I'm sure you are.
You are still carrying me.
Comforting me Father. Fulfilling my heart with hope and wonder.
Because within us we may find that unconditional love that we
crave and need so much.

Thank you.





CLAP



Kelly Toms

JUST A LITTLE BIT DESPERATE

Allison Meade

Sing me some counsel,
speak it into the mirrors
of my soul.

I'll slip on my jeans,
the ones filled
with holes and sneak
to the barn, anticipating
the engulfing darkness.

I'll kneel there in silence,
just loud enough
for you to hear my breath.

All I want is peace
and all you tell me is
someday
and something about the
promise of lions and lambs
and I pull away because
I know it won't happen.

I'm not arrogant,
I just know what's out there,
I live in the world you made.



SUSPENSION OF TIME

Andrei Miclea

dear, this daunting gaze of a thousand unspoken words
may not have been what you had in mind

and as your ticking heart creeps toward midnight's edge
all you wish to say is gleaming in your eyes
“please just tell me everything is going to be all right.”

dear I would but you see, my heart played me real good this time
she took the words out of my mouth and placed them on my
back.

a little rucksack of suspended animation weighing my world
more heavily.

it's making you darling pass slower before my eyes,
and my eyes pass even slower over you.

dear, maybe we'll rewrite the old with a dash of something new
a little more faithfulness in dotting my i's and crossing my t's
so when I write your name it won't look so incomplete
and with some help we'll take what's broken and make it whole
and you'll waste yourself on me so I can spend it all on you.

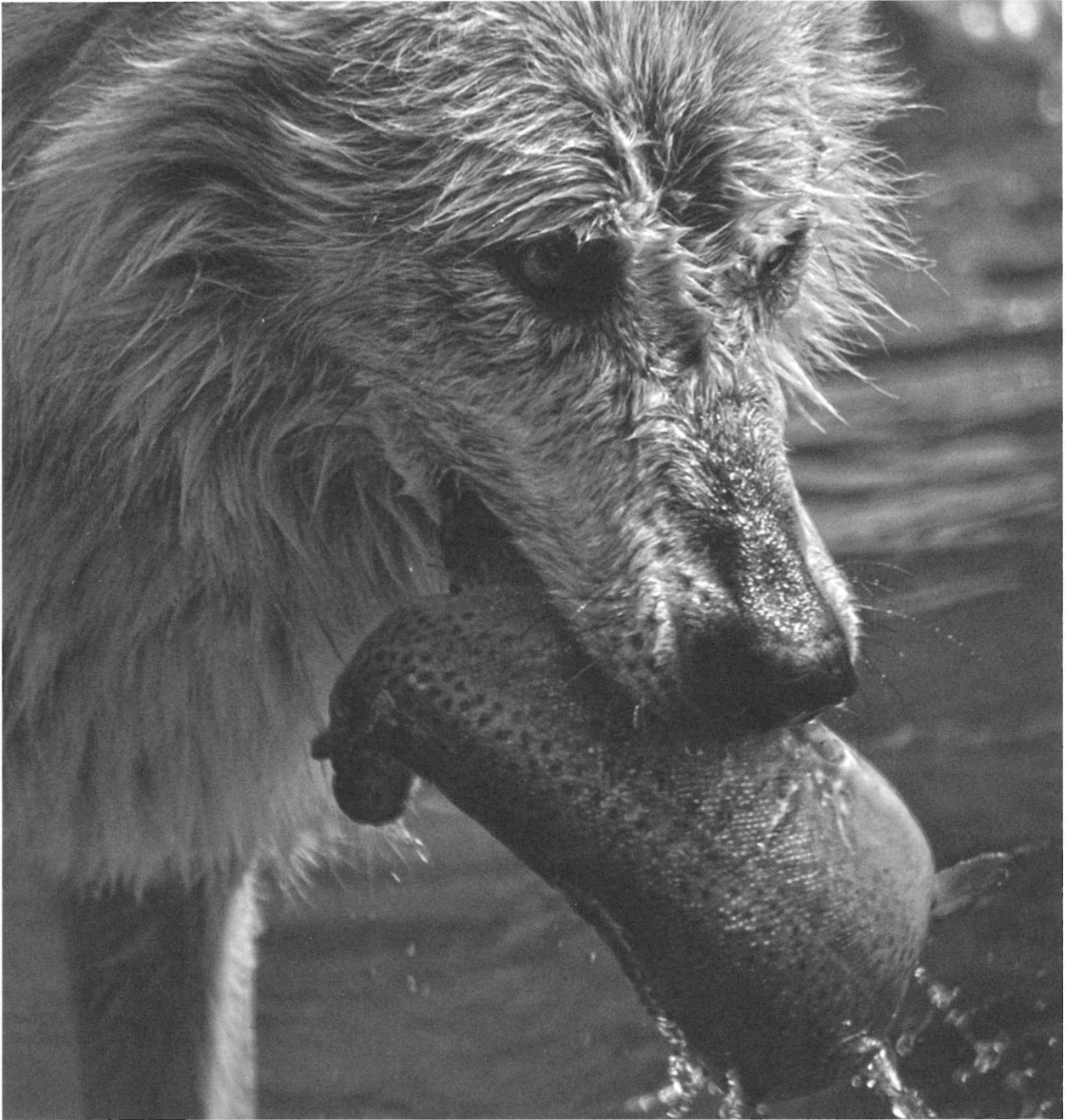
dear time, would you slow your stride and sing to the tune of my
heart

and whisper to me why music only slows when cracks begin to
show
when defeated hearts converge in spaces enclosed by a love only
felt

in momentary embraces of our helpless eyes that wonder
why we're cast under the spell of bleeding to live well.

darling, would you hurry up and slow down already.





UNTITLED
Keiko Fujii

THE CATCH

Daniel Kassahn

Do not underestimate
the power of the seize:

The master fisherman catches all,
releases all entanglements

to once-over us; cast us
into an isolated deep

where with abated breath
each wait for a just reward

- a new name I am told -
fried cod; smoked salmon; fillet of sole.

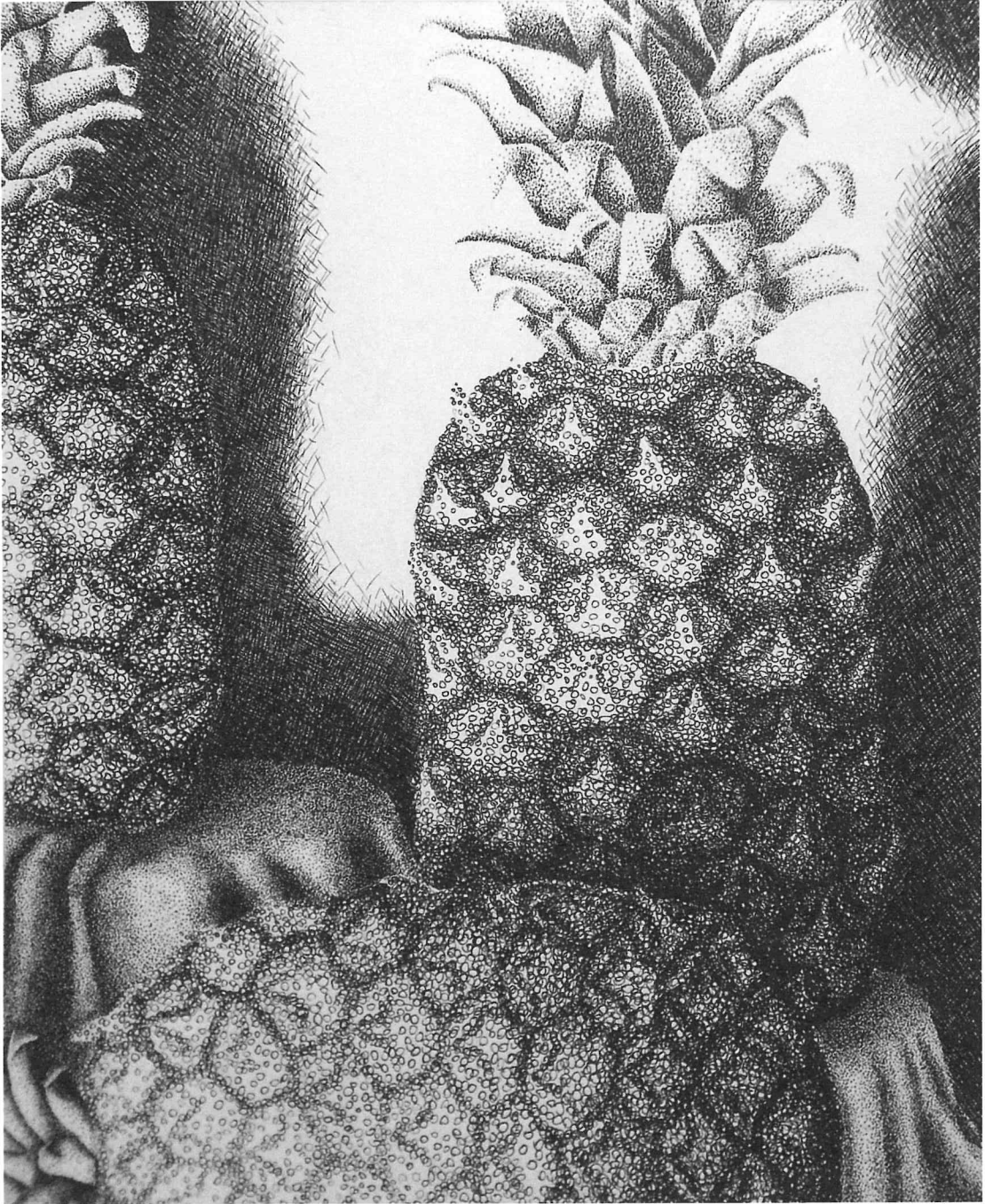


ALL THE WORLD'S

Ryan Lackey

“All the world’s a stage,” Shakespeare said;
it’s terrible and true. And I say instead,
the characters we always step behind,
the characters hide our fears and pride,
one face for today but not for tomorrow -
the self knows no self but begs and borrows
any other, indiscriminately -
these parasites will poison, rip away
a blind heart without sight, looking through
a mask’s eyes: distorted, dead, and cruel.





UNTITLED
Amy Shifley

prose

You campaign in poetry. You govern in prose.

~ Mario Cuomo



BITTER PEARL

Annie Punttenney

Based off the short story Death in Venice.

It was unbearably hot walking in the stiff, dark gray dress across the cobbled streets of Venice. A bead of sweat curled down Marjanna's stiff back, but she dared not swipe it away. Her starched white collar scratched against her pale skin until it was red and raw, and her shoes pinched her toes until they were numb. She hated it here, but that was no different from anywhere else she had been.

Marjanna's two sisters, in outfits identical to hers, marched ahead. In front of them, the governess and her mother walked side by side. It was supposed to be an orderly, two-by-two formation, but Marjanna lacked a walking partner. Her brother, Tadzio, should have been walking beside her, but he never did. He skipped and frolicked at the back of the group, running up to shop windows and pressing his nose against the glass. When Marjanna was much younger, she would follow her little brother to peer at the vibrantly colored displays, but before her little hands could reach the window, she would feel a smack on the back of her head, and would turn to find her mother standing over her, while her sisters glared at her from behind and the governess looked sheepish.

Marjanna glanced back at Tadzio, the rough fabric of her collar twisting at her neck. Though he never walked beside her, she couldn't lose sight of him either. If he went missing, all eyes would turn to her. There he was, running alongside a building and

chasing a group of crows until they took flight into the air. It was an odd sight, the boy in a dazzling white sailing suit with the scarlet ribbons, while black, dusty feathers fell to the ground around him. It was like seeing a glistening white building, such as those that populated Venice, smeared with dark, slimy algae, a blemish against something beautiful.

A slight movement caught Marjanna's eye, and she glared darkly in the direction of an older gentleman whose eyes were trained on her brother. The strange man was staying at the same hotel as her family, or so he appeared to be, for they saw him frequently. Marjanna was convinced that he was following Tadzio. Wherever they went, whether to the beach near the hotel or walking down San Marco square, the man was always trailing them. At first, Marjanna thought that perhaps the man was admiring her. Though the thought disturbed her, she felt a strange thrill at the idea that there was something about her that could capture the attention of a stranger, something that rose above her slate-colored dresses, above her sisters, above her brother. Then, during one of her family's visits to the hotel beach, she realized that the old man kept shuffling his papers and peering out at the ocean, where Tadzio was playing with his friends in the water. The man never took one glance toward the wooden platform where Marjanna sat with her sisters, learning lessons from the governess.

A crow skipped toward Marjanna, peering

nervously over its shoulder as Tadzio pursued its siblings until they took flight. Noticing the bird near Marjanna, his face broke into a wide grin and he charged. The bird squawked angrily and leapt into the air. As Tadzio ran past, Marjanna grabbed him from behind by both shoulders, then pulled him close to her. She strode forward while her brother squirmed under her grasp. Glancing back, she saw the old man arching his neck in an attempt to peer around her for a glimpse of her brother. Her stiff gray dress blocked his view, a storm cloud cutting out the light of the sun. Once he caught sight of Marjanna's cold glance, he looked away quickly, pretending to observe some obscure detail on a cracked, stone wall. Tadzio wriggled aggressively, the red, satiny lining of his sailor outfit catching the sunlight.

The noise of Tadzio's protests caused his mother to turn and eye Marjanna sharply. She loosened her grip and the boy slipped free, her fingers trailing against the bright fabric of his suit as he rushed away. Her mother's pursed lips loosened slightly as the boy approached her and charmingly kissed her hand. Marjanna's gaze drifted to the glimmering pearls that hung about her mother's neck. Each creamy-colored sphere had been polished to perfection, and clung faithfully to their owner. It seemed that her mother never took them off. With Tadzio standing so close in his brilliant, gleaming costume, Marjanna could almost see him curling into a ball and squeezing in place between the pale spheres resting upon his mother's neck.



DINER



Genetta Duncan

MEASURING UP

Tori Nunnenkamp

I took a swig of my third martini and tried to smile at the handful of girls I was entertaining at an interminable cocktail party. They laughed in the right places, but their eyes retained mostly vacancy. I'm sure they knew that the soiree was thrown by the university to celebrate my book hitting the bestseller list, and I still wasn't all that comfortable with the attention.

Dr. Sloan, a professor of social psychology at the university and my former boss, stood on the outskirts of the room, observing the crowds. I had been his secretary for three years before publishing my book. The job had come up right around the time I was failing my classes. Any way you sliced it, undergraduate life hadn't agreed with me.

A tumbler of brandy cupped in Dr. Sloan's hand, he had forgotten to take off his fedora after coming inside. It was the little things that escaped his brilliant mind. The doc could analyze the minutest detail of a social interaction, but pay a man to sit at a typewriter five days a week, and suddenly his secretary becomes invisible. Most days, he never noticed I was sloshed at work, unless I waved a whisky bottle under his nose and danced the Charleston.

I saw Larissa, a sociology secretary, making the rounds of the room on the arm of an elderly professor. She avoided my gaze and loudly greeted any passerby.



A year before, I had made a fool of myself over her, constantly asking to take her out. She finally relented and insisted that I meet her at the club, instead of picking her up. When I walked through the club doors and saw her talking to some friends, hand gesturing just so, bronze curls swaying, my heart flopped around like a fish gasping for water.

When I finally managed to walk across the crowded club in one piece, she sighed and asked for a glass of white wine. Anticipating an order of cocktails or champagne, I'd pawned my camera to come up with enough cash. We spent the rest of the night chatting with her friends and dancing together, even though she kept looking over her shoulder to spot any really distinguished gentlemen who might have wandered into the Moonlight Club.

Still, I had convinced myself that she was interested in me. The trouble that night came with my last martini, when I was leaning close to Larissa to whisper something endearing. My hand wasn't too steady, and most of the martini ended up on her skirt.

She wouldn't talk to me again until my book had been published to acclaim.

I suppose you could say I was blessed with a bolt of genius. Dr. Sloan had dismissed me early from work one Thursday, insisting I go home and rest. I guess he had taken offense earlier in the day when I had fallen asleep on

a stack of his notes to transcribe, only to wake up with the professor standing over me and ink marks marring my forehead.

I had retrieved my coat and shuffled outside. The walk home wasn't terribly long, but I had a few hours free and no conceivable way of how to spend them. Most nights, I celebrated the end another workday with a nightcap and a radio program or two. I was so busy looking at the tips of my galoshes while I crossed the university campus that I almost missed spotting Larissa coming out of the political science building, holding hands with one of the younger economics professors.

Come to think of it, she always sought after the men on campus with a recent book or an ingenious new theory. I supposed that she thought those men could afford to buy her all the baubles she still didn't have. The fact that I was young, attracted to her, and blessed with a face that wasn't hideous was just a bonus for her.

Before I could even blink, the doc's handwriting from all those transcribed notes imprinted itself over my vision. Scrawls of disjointed ideas flashed through my mind, dissecting and analyzing the image of Larissa holding that professor's hand. She looked a bit uncomfortable; although her pumps raised her height by a good three inches, the professor still towered over her, the lengths of his limbs unwittingly tugging at her arm.

A storm of ideas flooded my brain; and once

it had passed, I found a full, unique theory planted in my head.

In my book I said people were naturally drawn to those who fit them like a glove. No effort, no discomfort in holding hands meant that a relationship flowed smoothly from the start.

Starting as a joke, couples who read my theory would measure each other with the wife's dressmaker tape: first, their heights, from head to heel; next, the lengths of their fingers, forearms, feet, and calves; then, the widths of shoulders and hips. Circumferences of wrists and ankles came last, before the couple would tot up their differences and peruse the chart in my book.

A total difference of 0 inches, when a couple's bodies matched to perfection, secured a happy and well-suited future.

A total difference of up to 6.42 inches was shaky, but in my thesis I supposed it could work for the best.

But a total difference of anything beyond 8.13 inches was impossible. I assured my audience, in no uncertain terms, that such a difference would only result in heartbreak.

As more people read my book, snide comments began to fly around town. If a wife struggled to reach a mug on the top shelf, a husband might say, "If only you had longer arms like me." If a husband fit awkwardly in a

car, a wife might say, "If only you had shorter legs like me." Before long, couples started comparing the limbs and heights of their partners to those of their acquaintances. I got letters by the bagful, some claiming I had saved a marriage, most claiming I had broken a perfectly sound relationship.

Sure, I felt a little responsible. After all, it was my book that had started this craze in the first place. But it wasn't like I could help it. All that insight, all those formulas hadn't come from *my* head. They were *Sloan's* fault, but at least I had gotten the credit for it. Poor fellow, he didn't even realize just how potent his fountain pen ink had been.

Larissa came calling at my secretary desk the minute my book hit the bestseller list. She cooed for a bit before dropping rounded hints that I should take her out again. I smirked and sat back in my chair. Told her that I wished I could change our futures, but our height correlation made her utterly unsuitable for me.

She cocked her head and sidled closer to me. She was nearly sitting on my desk, and her skirt scrunched up under her rear. I had to resist the urge to look down to see just how much leg had been revealed with that movement.

I admit it; I nearly gave in to her flirting. I almost retracted my statement and begged her to let me squire her anywhere. But my

pride held, and I said, "You can't be serious. Your arms are too short, and your proportions are entirely wrong. You can't possibly expect me to try to compensate for your failures."

She huffed out of the office, of course, and the next night I saw her on the arm of an ancient but well-respected professor.



At the cocktail party, my group of blue-eyed darlings drifted away. Larissa meandered toward the bar by herself, momentarily detached from her ancient date. As a byway, she lingered in front of me. Her bronze hair was the same as ever, a fact that somehow further fueled my anger at seeing her. I nodded coolly. She returned the gesture and shook her hair back over her shoulder.

It was hard for me to speak with a clenched jaw. "Larissa, how good to see you." She looked over my shoulder and waved at an acquaintance. She turned her attention back to me. "You never *were* very good at making a woman feel welcome."

I smiled brightly. "At least I can tell her if her marriage will last past Christmas." She released a light laugh. "That is, if you can get her to talk to you." She made an effort to lower her eyebrows into a frown of sorts. "You see, that's why I had to break it off between us."

I wanted to shout at Larissa, but my voice just

sounded irritated. I wonder why I couldn't shout. "I was the one who broke it off. You just wanted me for my *money*. You thought my theory would make me *money*."

"No, darling." She pouted softly. "You don't understand. I thought you would be smart. I thought you might know something."

My brain sputtered, words having suddenly drained from me. *Book. I have a book.* I tried mentally to shore up my self-esteem again. *She doesn't have a book. People read my book.*

Neglecting even to say goodbye, she drifted past me, eyes focused on something just out of her reach.



ON THE FICTIONAL
Lauren Parker

PICTURES

Shaundrea Hirengen

In the second drawer of my nightstand I keep a picture of my grandmother. The photo is old and black and white. On the back someone wrote, *Fern 1951*, which means she is eleven years old. She is leaning against the rounded fender of a pick-up truck; to the left there is a chicken coop. In my head the truck has always been red.

If not for these telltale signs, the girl in the photo could be me. We both have the same awkward countenance, the same squinty eyed smile, like there's some odd thing in the distance which our near sighted vision can't make out. Neither of us are comfortable in front of a camera.

But the photo is gone.

I search everywhere, scavenging through shoe boxes overflowing with photos chronicling my own awkward adolescence. Every photo that passes through my hands is an affirmation of my beginning. Generations of faces cannot lie. My mother is there, my aunt, sister, and cousins. Each face is a piece of the puzzle but not the piece I am searching for.

I had been struck with a compulsion to find the picture, to see it and touch it, as if the physical presence of the photo could ease my anxious mind.

It seems most of my life has been consumed with trying to avoid the inevitable. I am not my mother, I am not my grandmother. I am

not. I am not. I am not.

I hid the photos so they could not find me. It makes it so much easier to outrun them.

Why do we spend so much time trying to run away from our roots? It never works. They are as strong as winter weeds and run as deep as oak trees. And I have never been a strong runner.

I find a picture with the three of us: It is a picture of my wedding day. We are centered around my great-grandmother—my mother, my grandmother, and myself. I am grasping my great-grandmother's hand and I can almost feel her arthritic grip, swollen knuckle bones, and her cool papery skin. Our eyes, our lips, the curve of our smiles, the secrets, told and untold, all the underlying tension, always advancing and retreating.

I can feel the pull. It is in the pictures I have found and the ones I have not found.

There are secrets here. They whisper to me.

It's all there—in the pictures. But even now I cannot put a name to it.

In my head I hear—*I am not. I am not. I am not.* But my heart is answering back—*you are. You are. You are.*

TATTERED

Heather Harney

Stations of the Cross are placed around the auditorium. Her favorite station is in front of the stage; a rugged wooden cross, standing seven feet tall, is there for anyone to nail their troubles, concerns, or pleas for forgiveness to. The act of driving a rusty square nail into a thin piece of paper and wood makes her weep. She knows this is not enough. Her body should be the one broken and nailed to the cross. Her sins are many. She is unworthy of mercy and grace. Love is hard for her to accept, even at the foot of the cross.

One day a new station appears. The woman is confused. Her station journey always ends at the foot of the cross with acknowledgement that the act of giving everything to Him is something she has never truly done. The station table holds a crystal bowl with strips of ripped white cloth. The significance of the rags lies in the Resurrection says the sign. Hallelujah! Instructions to tie a tattered rag around wrists in celebration of His defeat of death and His coverage of all sin are in bold letters.

She hesitates.
Her whole being trembles.
Shame floods her limbs.
Guilt weighs on her heart.
“I have not worn His return before.”
Water arises and wells in her eyes.
“I can’t wear this and not give it all away.”
Fear chokes her. Soon shadows dance in the

candlelight.
Demon voices taunt her, you are unworthy of such love.
Could she reveal her true self to Him and be loved, really?
Would He accept the voices and embrace her unconditionally?
The voices grow louder.

She looks at the rags through a wall of tears. Fighting against fiends, she reaches for a rag. The sound of hammering echo throughout the auditorium as others nail their own issues to the cross. No one sees her struggle.

“Can I display His return?”

Inside, she wrestles with darkness, lies, truth, and acceptance as she takes the tattered cloth.

A shredded piece of fabric, a symbolic gesture, seems simple. She is not.

Letting the cloth touch her arm silences the voices but does not quell her inability to let Him love her completely.

“Help me,” she cries out, “I want to lay it all down. The pain is too much. Lies and deeds make me hollow. Help me.”

Frayed. Unraveled. She empties herself.



SAVIOR OF THE BLOOD
Annelise Koeth

ERILYN

Cheyenne Buck

Life for Erilyn consisted of three simple rules: Don't ever leave the caves during the daytime, don't stray from the others when you go outside, and the sooner you return to the caves, the better. No one ever questioned the rules, or if they did, they never spoke of it. Everything was easier that way. When she was younger, Erilyn asked, Anya, an old healer woman, if anyone had ever been outside during the daytime. Anya knew many stories and was the most gifted of all the storytellers known to the Cave people. She wove tapestries with her tales, painted masterpieces with her words. It was not a long story that Erilyn heard but it was her very favorite... until the ending that is.

Erilyn was so mesmerized by the story and was afraid that one day, Anya might refuse to tell it to her so she wrote it down so she had a perfect copy of the story that fueled her imagination. She would look at her copy when all others were resting for the long night of foraging and hunting before them. It didn't matter that the ink began to fade from use because Erilyn had stored the story in her heart where only the most precious things in life are stored. It became part of Erilyn. Who she was, her passion. She would gaze up at the night sky when others were scurrying to get back inside the caves and let Anya's words come to life in the stars. It always went like this:

"Leander was born on a stormy night when I was just a little girl. I don't remember much about that night except for the fierceness of

the weather raging outside the caves. Leander was different from all the others when he was growing up. He had a curiousness about him, a wandering heart that never seemed to rest here at home. People used to murmur about him saying that some of that storm found its way into his spirit the night he was born. When he was outside, he would often gaze out at the horizon, trying to glimpse the daylight that had just slipped away. He would sit around the fire at night, lost in the flames and his own thoughts. For all his oddities, he had a spirit around him that gave life to all those who he came into contact with. And what beautiful and strange stories he came up with! He could send chills of fear prickling down your back one minute and then paint a scene of such serenity you could feel it in your very soul the next. Stories of things no one ever imagined to dream of were his very favorite to tell. My favorite ones used to be about the daytime, outside of these caves, when light shines and creatures never seen wake from their slumber and roam the land, free and wild.

"Ever so quickly yet oh so slowly, I fell in love with Leander, his passion, curiosity, and his stories. When we had grown and our young ones ran around the caves, he began to talk of the outside world a little differently. He would tell his wild stories the same, but when everyone was sleeping, he would often tell me frightful ideas of leaving the caves, exploring the land farther than what could be traveled in the dark, breaking into the daylight. I